

# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cooper.



PREPARING FOR THE FIRST NIGHT IN THE BUSH.

## CEDAR CREEK; FROM THE SHANTY TO THE SETTLEMENT. A TALE OF CANADIAN LIFE.

### CHAPTER XI.—THE BATTLE WITH THE WILDERNESS BEGINS.

A ROARING fire of logs upon the wide hearth, logs built up into walls and roof, logs wrought into rough furniture of tables and stools—here, within the emigrant's hut, the all-encompassing forest had

but changed its shape. Man had but pressed it into his service; from a foe it had become a friend; the wooden realm paid tribute, being subjugated.

The still life of the cabin was rude enough. No appliances for ease, not many for comfort, as we in England understand the words. Yet the settler's wife, sitting by her wheel, and dressed in the homespun fruits thereof, had a well-to-do blooming aspect, which gaslight and merino could not have

improved; and the settler's boy, building a miniature shanty of chips in the corner, his mottled skin testifying to all sorts of weather-beating, looked as happy as if he had a toy-shop at his command, instead of the word being utterly unknown in his experience; and the baby, rolled up in the hollowed pine-log, slept as sweetly as if satin curtains inclosed its rest. Back to Sam Holt's mind recurred words which he knew well: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth."

The woman rose and curtsied. She was not accustomed to make that respectful gesture for a long time back; but something in the appearance of the strangers half-involuntarily constrained it.

"I needn't ask if you're Canadian-born," said Mr. Holt; "you've the manners of the old country."

"My father and mother were from Wiltshire, and so be I," she answered, setting back her wheel, and looking gratified at the implied commendation. "But that be so long ago as I scarce remember."

"And she made amends by marrying me," said the settler, entering from the outer door, and latching it behind him. "Mary, get the pan and fix some supper quick. Them duck I shot won't be bad. You see, I've been expectin' you along rather;" and he flung down an armful of wood, which he began to arrange with architectural reference to the back-log and fore-stick.

"Expecting us?" exclaimed Robert Wynn.

"You're for lot fifteen in ninth concession, township of Gazelle? Wal, so I guessed; for I heard from Zack Bunting who lives at the 'Corner,' that it was sold by Landenstein; and I calculated you'd be along presently;" and he finished his fire-building by a touch with his foot, which appeared to demolish much of his labour, but in reality conduced to his object of intensifying the heat and blaze.

"Benny," to the boy, who had sat on the ground staring at the new-comers, "go tell your mother to be spry." The little fellow went accordingly, by the side door through which she had disappeared a few minutes previously; and the Irish servant, planting himself on the vacated spot with his toes to the fire comfortably, commenced to erect of the child's chips a two-storied mansion.

"You've got a good slice of bush there, back from the pond; though the cedars will be troublesome, I guess."

"Oh, we bargained for the cedars," said Sam Holt. "There's enough to clear without laying an axe to them for many a day."

"It's all the doing of that spring creek, running through the middle of the lot, as fine a water-privilege as ever I see; but the cedars are where it gets to the pond. If the bed was deepened down below, it's my opinion the swamp would be drained."

"You seem to know the ground well," said Robert, with interest.

"I guess I ought to, that have shot over it before ever a blazed line ran through them woods. We was furthest west once, but that's over by a long spell; the neighbourhood's pretty thick now, and the 'Corner' will be a town shortly."

"Well, if this is a 'thick' neighbourhood, I

should like to know his idea of a thin one," said Arthur, *sotto voce*, to Sam Holt. "We have met only this house for miles."

"Oh, they ain't many miles, only you thought they was, cos' I guess you ain't used to the stumps," put in the settler. "The back lot to ours, of the same number, is took by a Scotchman, and last week I run a blazed line across to his clearing through the bush; for you see I'm often away, trapping or still-hunting, and Mary here thought she'd be a trifle less lonesome if she had a way of going over the hill to her friend Mrs. Macpherson. The other way is round by the 'Corner,' which makes it five miles full; but now Benny can run across of a message, by minding the marks; can't you, my lad?"

"Yes, father," answered the boy, proudly. "And I can chop a blaze myself, too." Benny was not much taller than an axe handle.

Arthur looked from the child round at the wife, who was often left alone in this solitude of woods, and longed for the slender chain of a scarred line of trees between her and some other woman. A healthy, firm outline of face, wholly unacquainted with nervousness; quiet, self-reliant, hard-working; perhaps of a Dutch type of character. Her husband was a sturdy broad-set man, with lithe limbs, and quick senses looking out from his clear-featured countenance: he had a roving unsubdued eye, befitting the hunter more than the farmer.

"I wouldn't desire," said the latter, seating himself on the end of the table, while his wife superintended a pan of frizzling pork on the coals—"I wouldn't desire, for a feller that wanted to settle down for good, a more promising location than yours at the Cedars. The high ground grows the very best sorts of hard-wood—oak, sugar-maple, elm, basswood. Not too many beech, or I'd expect sand; with here and there a big pine and a handful of balsams. The underbrushing ain't much, except in the swamp."

"I'm glad to hear that," said Mr. Holt, "for the fall is going fast, and we'll have to work pretty hard before snow comes."

"So I'm thinkin'. But you ain't going to settle: you haven't the cut of it: you're settled already."

"How do you know?"

"Oh, you didn't listen as they did," pointing his thumb towards the Wynns, "when I fell to talkin' of the ground. I know'd my men at once. Nor you didn't stare about as they did, as if the house and fixins was a show at a copper ahead."

"You must excuse our curiosity," said Robert, politely.

"Surely; every man that has eyes is welcome to use 'em," replied the backwoodsman, bluntly. "We ain't got no manners in the bush, nor don't want 'em, as I tell Mary here, when she talks any palaver. Now, wife, them prifters must be done;" and he left his seat on the table, to pry over her pan.

"Then take the cakes out of the bake-kettle, will you," said Mary; "and if them ducks be raw, 'tain't my fault, remember." She was evidently a woman of few words, but trenchant.

Thus warned, her husband did not press the point, but took the stewing fowl under his own

care, displaying a practical experience of cookery won in many a day of bush life.

"These duck was shot on your pond, stranger; if you be a good hand with the gun, you'll never want for fresh meat while that water holds together. The finest maskelonge and pickerel I ever see, was hooked out of it."

Arthur's face brightened; for the sportsman instinct was strong in him, and he had been disappointed hitherto by finding the woods along their track empty of game.

"'Cos the critters have more sense than to wait by the road to be shot," explained the backwoodsman, as he dished up his stew—a sort of hodge-podge of wild-fowl, the theory of which would have horrified an epicure; but the practical effect was most savoury.

Now the boy Benny had never in his small life seen any edifice nobler than a loghouse on the ground-floor; and the upper story which Mr. Callaghan had built with his chips seemed to him as queer a phenomenon as a man having two heads.

"Bless the boy!" exclaimed Andy, "but he doesn't know what a stairs is."

"And how should he?" asked the father, rather sharply. "He ha'n't seen nothin' but the bush. One time I took him to Greenock, and he couldn't stop wonderin' what med all the houses come together. For all that, he ha'n't a bad notion of chopping, and can drive a span of oxen, and is growin' up as hardy as my rifle—eh, Benny!"

"He cut all the wood I wanted while you were away last time, Peter," chimed in the mother. So the strangers saw that the principle which leads parents to bore their unoffending visitors with copy-books and the "Battle of Prague," is applicable to backwood accomplishments also.

As a general rule, conversation does not flourish in the bush. The settler's isolated life is not favourable to exchange of thought, and events are few. Silence had fallen upon the woman in this house to a remarkable degree, and become incorporated with her. She went about her work quietly and quickly, speaking but five sentences in the course of the evening. The last of these was to notify to her husband that "the skins was ready."

"We've no beds," said he, with equal curttness. "You must try and be snug in a wrap-up on the floor to-night. More logs, Benny;" and additional wood was heaped down, while he brought forward a bundle of bear and buffalo skins, enough to blanket them all. Mary had already picked up the pine-log containing her baby, and brought it into the other room out of sight, whither her husband followed; and Benny crept into a sort of bed-closet in the far corner.

All night long, through the outer darkness, came a sound as of limitless sea upon a lonely strand. Robert knew it for the wind wandering in the forest, and even in his home dreams it mingled a diapason, until the early sun gleamed through the chinks of the door, and flung a ray across his face. Simultaneously the poultry outside and the infant within woke up, commencing their several noises; and the farmer, coming out, built up the fire, and hung down the bake-kettle to heat for the

breakfast-bread. Then he invited his company to "a wash" at the spring; and, leading them by a wood-path beside the house, they came to a pellucid pool fed by a rivulet, which, after flowing over its basin, ran off rapidly to lower ground. Here Benny was flung in by his father, though the water was quite deep enough to drown him; but he dived, and came out buoyant as a coot.

"Now go fetch the cow, my lad, and help your mother to fix breakfast, while we walk round the clearing." But this morning she had an efficient coadjutor in the person of Andy Callaghan; who dandled the baby while the cakes were being made, his sharp eye learning a lesson meantime; and milked the cow while the child was being dressed; and cut slices of pork, superintending its frizzling while the room was being set to rights. Three or four attempts to draw the silent woman into conversation were utterly abortive.

"Throth, an' you're a jewel of a wife," remarked the Irishman, when everything seemed done. "I'll engage I won't have the good luck to get one wid her tongue in such good order."

Mary Logan laughed. "It be from having no folk to talk with," she said.

"An' a sin an' a shame it is for himself to lave you alone," rejoined Andy, looking complimentary. "Now I want to know one thing, that has been botherin' me ever since I came in here. What's them strings of yellow stuff that are hangin' out of the rafters, an' are like nothin' I see in all my days, 'cept shavin's?"

"Sarce," answered Mrs. Logan, looking up: "them's sarce."

"I'm as wise as ever," said Andy. Whereupon she went to the compartment which acted as store-closet, and, bringing out a pie which had a wooden spoon erect in it, proffered him a bit.

"Ah," quoth Mr. Callaghan with satisfaction, "that's English talk; I know what that manes, well. So ye calls apples 'sarce!' I've heerd tell that every country has a lingo of its own, an' I partly b'lieve it now. But throth, that way of savin' 'em would be great news intirely for the childher at home!"

So thought Robert Wynn afterwards, when he found the practice almost universal among the Canadians, and wondered that a domestic expedient so simple and serviceable should be confined to American housekeepers.

"Peter planted an orchard the first thing when we settled, and maples be plenty in the bush," said Mrs. Logan, with unusual communicativeness.

"Yes, ma'am," rejoined Andy, suavely, and not in the least seeing the connection between maple trees and apple-pie. "I wondher might I make bould to ax you for one of them stharnings? they're sich a curiosity to me." And he had the cord of leathern pieces stowed away in one of the provision-hampers before the others came in from the fields.

There they had seen the invariable abundance and wastefulness of bush-farming: no trace of the economy of land, which need perforce be practised in older countries; but an extravagance about the very zig-zag fences, which unprofitably occupied,

with a succession of triangular borderings, as much space as would make scores of garden-beds. "No-body cares for the selvages when there is a whole continent to cut from," remarked Sam Holt, in a sententious way he had.

A yield of from twenty to five and twenty bushels per acre of wheat, and two hundred and fifty bushels of potatoes, were mentioned by the farmer as an average crop. His barns and root-house were full to repletion. Nothing of all this property was locked up: a latch on the doors sufficed.

"I suppose, then, you have no rogues in the bush?" said Robert.

"Where everybody's as well off as another, there nint no thievin'," was the pithy answer. "A wolf now and then among our sheep, is all the robbers we has."

After breakfast the bullocks were yoked afresh. "I guess as how you've stumps before you to-day, a few," said the farmer, coming out axe on shoulder. "Taint only a blaze up beyond your place at the Cedars, and not much better than a track of regulation width from the 'Corner' to there. Only for that job of underbrushing I want to get finished, I'd be along with you to-day."

He and his boy Benny walked with the travellers so far as their way lay together. The wife stood at the door, shading her eyes with her hand, till the lumbering wagon was lost to view round the edge of the woods.

The day's journey was just a repetition of yesterday's, with the stumps and the mud-holes rather worse. The "Corner," with its single sawmill and store, offered no inducement for a halt; and a tedious two miles further brought them to "hum."

#### CHAPTER XII.—CAMPING IN THE BUSH.

"WELL!" exclaimed Robert Wynn, "here is my estate; and neither pond, nor swamp, nor yet spring creek, do I behold."

He looked again at the landmark—an elm tree at the junction of the lot line and the concession road, which bore the numbers of each, "Nine, Fifteen," in very legible figures on opposite sides. A "blaze" had been made by chopping away a slice of the bark with an axe, about three feet from the ground, and on the white space the numbers were marked by the surveyor. All roads through the forest, and all farm allotments, are first outlined in this way, before the chopper sets to work.

The new townships in Upper Canada are laid out in parallel lines, running nearly east and west, sixty-six chains apart, and sixty-six feet in width; which are termed concession lines, being conceded by government as road allowances. These lands thus inclosed are subdivided into lots of two hundred acres by other lines, which strike the concession roads at right angles every thirty chains; and every fifth of these lot lines is also a cross-road. We have all looked at maps of the country, and wondered at the sort of chess-board counties which prevail in the back settlements; the same system of parallelograms extends to the farms.

Robert's face was a little rueful. Twenty yards in any direction he could not see, for the overpower-

ing bush, except along the line of road darkened with endless forest. The wagon was being unpacked, for the driver sturdily declared that his agreement had been only to bring them as far as this post on the concession: he must go back to the "Corner" that evening, on his way home.

"An' is it on the road ye'll lave the masher's things?" remonstrated Andy.

"I guess we han't no masters here, Pat," was the reply; "but if you see anywhar else to stow the traps, I ain't partie'ler." And he stolidly continued unloading.

"Come," said the cheery voice of Sam Holt, "we will have daylight enough to explore the lot, and select a site for a camp. I think I can discover the tops of cedars over the hardwood trees here. The boxes will take care of themselves, unless a squirrel takes into his head to inspect them. Let's follow the concession line along westward first."

Callaghan stayed by the luggage, feeling by no means sure of its safety, and saw the rest of the party gradually receding among the trees, with sensations akin to those of a sailor on a desert island. Sitting upon the tool-chest, like an item of property saved from a wreck, Andy looked from the base to the summit of the huge walls of forest that encompassed him, and along the canal of sky overhead, till his countenance had fallen to zero.

The shipwrecked sensation had gone further; Mr. Holt saw it lurking in other faces, and forthwith found all advantages possible in the lot. The soil was sure to be the best: he could tell by the timber. Its height proved the depth of earth. When the trees grew shorter, a hidden treasure of limestone flag lay beneath the surface, useful for drains and building. And even the entangled cedar-swamp was most desirable, as furnishing the best wood for rail-fences and logs for a house.

But nothing could look more unpromising. Blackish pools of water alternated with a network of massive roots all over the soil, underneath broad evergreen branches: trunks of trees leaned in every direction, as if top-heavy. Wilder confusion of thicket could not be conceived. "The cedars troublesome! I should think so," groaned their owner.

"This is the worst bit," acknowledged Sam. "Now, if we could see it, the lake is down yonder; perhaps if we strike a diagonal across the lot, we may come to some rising ground." With the pocket compass for guide they left the blazed line, which they had followed hitherto. After a short distance the bush began to thin, and the forest twilight brightened.

"A beaver meadow!" exclaimed Sam Holt, who was foremost. Green as emerald, the small semi-circular patch of grass lay at the foot of gentle slopes, as if it had once been a lakelet itself. "Two acres ready cleared, with the finest dairy grass only waiting to be eaten," continued encouraging Sam. "And the clearing on the hill will command the best view in the township: there's the site for your house, Wynn. Altogether you've had rare luck in this lot."

"But why is that green flat called a beaver meadow?" asked Robert.

"Do you see the creek running alongside? No, you can't for the underbrush; but it's there all the same. Well, they say that long ago beavers dammed up the current in such places as this, with clay and brushwood, so that the water spread over all level spaces near; and when the Indians and French were at war, the red men cut away the dams and killed the beavers wholesale, to spite their enemies. You're to take that just as an *on dit*, recollect."

"And is all that verdure an appearance or a reality?"

"Something of both: I don't say but you will occasionally find it treacherous footing, needing drainage to be comfortable. See! there's the pond at last."

They had been climbing out of the denser woods, among a younger growth on the face of the slope; and when they turned, the sheet of water was partially visible over the sunken cedar swamp.

"A 'pond!'" exclaimed Arthur; "why, it must be three miles across to those limestone cliffs. What pretty islets! Such endless varieties of wood and water!"

"I think we Americans are rather given to the diminutive style of parlance," quoth Mr. Holt. "We have some justification in the colossal proportion of all the features of Nature around us: what is this pretty lake but a mere pool, compared with our Eric and Superior?"

"It is one of a chain," remarked Robert, taking from his breast-pocket a map of the district, which had his own farm heavily scored in red ink. Often had he contemplated that outline of the *terra incognita* on which he now trod, and longed for the knowledge he now possessed, which, after its manner, had brought him both good and evil. Like balls threaded on a cord, a succession of lakes, connected by cascades and portages, or by reaches of river, stretched away to the north-west, sorely marring the uniformity of the chess-board townships.

As they picked their way back along the lot line northward, Mr. Holt stopped suddenly. "I hear a very singular noise," he said, "for which I am wholly at a loss to account, unless there be Indians about in the neighbourhood. Even then, it is totally unlike their cries. Listen!"

His sharper senses had detected before theirs a distant wail, proceeding from some distance in front, apparently—weird and wild as it could be, dying away or surging upon the ear as the wind swept it hither or thither. Arthur shrugged his shoulders. "You have no ghosts in these forests, Holt, I suppose?"

"The country's too new for anything of the sort," replied he, gravely.

"Nor any mocking-birds that can be playing us a trick? Or dryads warning us off their territory?"

He had recognised the performance of Andy Callaghan, who, when they turned the corner of the allotment, was discovered seated on the boxes as when they saw him last, and crooning the dimmallest melody. But he had, in the meantime, recovered himself sufficiently to gather brushwood,

and kindle a fire beside the road; likewise to cook a panful of rashers as the shadows grew longer and the day later.

"But sure I thought ye wor lost intirely; sure I thought ye wor never comin' at all, Masther Robert avourneen. 'Twas that med me rise the keen. A single livin' thing I didn't lay me eyes on since, barrin' a big frog. I'm afear'd thim are like sticks, Masther Arthur, they're so long fryin'."

"No matter, Andy, they'll do first-rate. I'd only advise you to chop up more. I feel like eating all that myself," and, trencher on knee, they dined, with real backwood appetites.

A shelter for the night was the next consideration. Mr. Holt constituted himself architect, and commenced operations by lashing a pole across two trees at about his own height; the others cut sticks and shrubs for roofing. Three young saplings sloped back to the ground as principal rafters, and on these were laid a thatch of brushwood; the open ends of the hut were filled with the same material.

"Now," said Sam Holt, contemplating the work of his hands with professional pride, "when we have a big fire built in front, and a lot of hemlock brush to lie on, we shall be pretty comfortable."

And he instructed his novices further in the art of making their couch luxuriously agreeable, by picking the hemlock fine, and spreading over it a buffalo skin. Sam Holt had evidently become acquainted with "considerable" bush lore at his University of Toronto.

#### PEKIN—ITS VISITORS FROM THE FAR WEST.

At the period when the Crusades were drawing to a close, and just at the very time when our Edward I returned from one of those mad enterprises in the west of Asia, the most illustrious traveller of the middle ages, Marco Polo, a native of Venice, groped his way to the far east of the great continent, scaling high mountains, crossing lofty table-lands, traversing vast deserts, passing numberless rivers, and intermingling with wild nomadic tribes. He may be regarded as the first European discoverer of China, or the kingdom of Cathay, as it is styled in his pages—a region proudly denominated "the Celestial Empire," and "the Flowery Land," whose rulers have arrogantly assumed themselves to be "the Sons of Heaven," "the Brothers of the Sun and Moon." It was in the year 1274 that the adventurer reached Kambalu, "the city of the khan," a name then newly bestowed on the Pekin of the present day, which had previously been called Shuntien-fu, "the city obedient to Heaven." Kublaic Khan, the great warrior, statesman, and administrator, first of the dynasty of the Mongols, or Western Tartars, was then upon the throne, who was so much pleased with the stranger that he appointed him to a high post at court, and employed him on missions to various parts of the empire. Through seventeen years he remained in the country; and neither eye nor ear was idle.

Among other things, he noted the order of the people, the vigilance of the police, the populousness of the cities, the utility of the grand canal, and the immense number of bridges thrown across the natural and artificial water-courses. He remarked also the ferry-boats and post-houses; the hospices, or places of refuge provided for pilgrims and the poor of all classes; the frequent use of the bamboo, with which the viceroys scourged the mandarins, the mandarins their inferior officers, and these in their turn the common people, so as to provoke the comment, "Of a surety there is no such country for stick as Cathay;" the lanterns carried after dark as a precaution against robbery; the enormous bell suspended in a lofty building in the centre of the capital, sounded every evening as a signal for all persons to retire to their homes—

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;"

the division of the city into two portions, Tartar and Chinese; and the vast extent of the imperial palace,

"Where twice five miles of fertile ground,  
With walls and towers were girdled round."

It is reasonably concluded by many that China had reached the highest point of her prosperity at this period, the end of the thirteenth century. Few more important events have ever occurred than the narrative which Marco Polo compiled of his travels, if, as commonly supposed, an acquaintance with it was a powerful inducement to Columbus to attempt to solve the mystery of the Atlantic, in the hope of reaching, by a western route, the renowned Cathay, so remarkable for the grandeur of its court, the number of its cities, the value of its products, and the curious arts of its inhabitants. However this may be, it is certain that the honour of first illustrating the eastern district of the old world, and discovering a western continent, belongs to sons of the two great Italian republics of mediæval times, Venice and Genoa.

Nearly four centuries elapsed before any special attempt was made by the governments of Europe to open direct communication with the court of Peking. The Russians took the initiative, as might have been expected from the proximity of their empire to that of the Celestials. Some jottings respecting the more important missions will be seasonable.

In the reign of the czar Alexis, father of Peter the Great, an embassy was despatched, under Baikov, the son of a boyar of Tobolsk. He crossed the great Mongolian desert at the head of a caravan of Bokharian and Russian merchants, and reached Peking in the year 1655. The czar was unfortunate in his choice of an ambassador. He was a sturdy Cossack, unconciliatory, and abundantly consequential, though with some right notions in his head. He was out of humour because only ten courtiers were sent to meet him, who advanced but half a verst from the walls of the capital. He would not alight from his horse on entering the gates, nor bend the knee on passing the imperial palace, alleging very reasonably that he never saluted his own czar except in his presence, and then only by taking off his cap. He took offence at the tea which was offered him as a cup of wel-

come; for, as it happened to be a great fast of the Russian Church, the Chinese had made it sinfully, with milk and butter, as if to insult him. Nothing could induce the envoy to part with the presents brought for the emperor till he had delivered his master's letter; and he insisted upon doing this with his own hand. Well, not the slightest objection was raised to granting him an audience for the purpose; but the performance of the ko-too was made an indispensable condition. The mandarins wished to instruct him in the happy art of going through the ceremony with ease and decorum; but the offer was declined. This said ceremonial, so often a cause of dispute between the Chinese court and Europeans, consists in making nine prostrations, or going down nine times on both knees, and each time touching the ground with the forehead. Much more prepared was such a man as Baikov to say "Hail fellow, well met," to the self-styled Brother of the Sun and Moon, than entertain for a moment this ko-tooing proposal. Accordingly, envoy, letter, and presents, were sent back to the frontier, with the rebuke, that "conduct such as his gave proof of little understanding; and, though he styled himself the czar's ambassador, he wanted the capacity required for that honourable office." It appears from fragments of his journal, that after a residence of six months in the capital, "neither himself nor his people could tell whether it was great or small," having been confined the whole time to the house appointed for their abode. He correctly states that the Mantchoo dynasty began thirteen years before the date of his embassy, or about the year 1642.

The Dutch next appeared, in the following year, and were more pliable. They passed through the heart of the country from Canton to Peking, were honourably received on the way, but very sourly treated in the capital, having miserable lodgings and scanty entertainment provided for them. Cw- ing to having no emperor or king to name, with the utter impossibility of conveying an intelligent idea of a republic, they were evidently viewed as a mean people, of no more note than a man without a head. Being at last promised an audience, they were conveyed to the palace at dusk, and had to sit up all night in an unfurnished dimly-lighted apartment, in order to be in readiness for the interview, as all levees were then held at break of day. The room was filled with a motley assemblage, all waiting for the honour of a presentation. In one corner was an envoy from a Tartar prince, dressed in a long sheep-skin coat, with large boots, bare arms, and a horse's tail dangling from his cap; close at hand was the ambassador of a Mongol khan, who wore a blue silk dress, richly embroidered with gold; and cheek by jowl with him was the representative of the Grand Llama, attired in a yellow robe, with a broad hat like a cardinal's, and a string of large beads around his neck. When the weary night was over, officials appeared to conduct the parties to the Hall of Audience. This was of white marble, entered by five flights of steps, of which the central one was reserved exclusively for the emperor; and never touched by any other foot. There were attendants present in glittering dresses, and soldiers

with gorgeous banners. The throne was empty, but all the ambassadors were required to make three prostrations before its emptiness. At length the sound of bells announced the approach of the great personage, Shun-che. Then followed the separate presentations, preceded by the ko-too. Nine times the Hollanders went plump upon their knees, touched the marble pavement with their foreheads, and practically licked the dust before him, in the hope of obtaining a good commercial treaty, and filling their money-bags. But they were completely disappointed, and it served them right. Not a look of encouragement did the proud pagan cast upon them. Not a word did he speak. But afterwards it was officially notified that they were at liberty to come to China once in eight years; not to trade, however, but only to bring presents in acknowledgment of their vassalage! This mission arrived at Pekin on the 17th of July, 1656, and left it on the 16th of October following, having remained ninety-one days.

Nothing daunted by their ill success, the Dutch sent another embassy a few years later, under Van Hoorn, a phlegmatic man, who made up his mind to submit with good grace to any and every indignity that might be put upon him. He and his suite performed the ko-too over and over again, not in the emperor's presence, but before a vacant throne, and were dismissed without any favour whatever, to reflect upon the folly of their pilgrimage and prostrations. The mission entered Pekin on the 20th of June, 1667, and left it on the 5th of August, having stayed forty-six days.

Upon the failure of the Russian embassy, war broke out between the two empires, which was waged on their respective frontiers in the valley of the Amoor. The Chinese obtained advantages, and compelled a number of the enemy by famine to surrender, who were taken prisoners to Pekin, where they met with a very different reception to that experienced by some of our own countrymen in the present day. The first Russian church in the city was built for the accommodation of these captives, and the place appointed for their habitation was called the Russian street. Upon the return of peace, Peter the Great sent an envoy to Pekin to negotiate a profitable commerce, for the furs of Siberia always realized high prices in the Chinese markets. This was Isbrant Ives, whose journey from Moscow across the wilds and wastes of central Asia occupied more time than a voyage by sea; for it was not until nineteen months had passed that "he could return thanks to the great God, who had conducted them all well and safe to their destined place." He relates his difficulty in eating, not with knives and forks, but with little ivory sticks, or chop-sticks, and his relish for the soups, of which the chief ingredient was a green glutinous substance found on rocks in the sea; in fact, the edible birds' nests. Ives obtained permission for Russian caravans to proceed to Pekin at regular intervals, under the superintendence of the Chinese government. He reached the city on the 5th of November, 1692, and left on the 17th of February, 1693, thus remaining a hundred and six days.

The subjects of the czar being addicted to strong potations, which rendered them riotous, the Chinese authorities threatened the entire discontinuance of the caravan trade. This led to a third Russian mission, conducted by Leoff Vassilovich Ismayloff, "a gentleman of a family very well known and much respected, and a captain of the guards." He took with him a Scotchman in a medical capacity, "honest John Bell, of Antermoney," who wrote a minute and interesting account of the overland journey, and of all the proceedings of the embassy. The Great Wall filled them with astonishment. "The Chinese," says Bell, "commonly call it the Endless Wall. The appearance of it, running from one high rock to another, with square towers at certain intervals, even at a distance is most magnificent." They passed it by a great gate, which was closed every night, and always guarded by a thousand men, under the command of two officers of rank, one a Chinese and the other a Mantchoo Tartar. Troubles began with the arrival of the party at the capital. They wished to escape the ko-too, but the mandarins were inexorable. For their interview with the emperor Kang-hi, then near the close of his long reign of sixty-two years, they were conducted to the palace of Yuen-min-yuen, recently desolated by the allied British and French, and found the Hall of Audience at the end of a noble avenue of trees. After waiting some time, the potentate came in at a back door, and seated himself upon the throne. Ismayloff advanced, attended by a mandarin, and, kneeling, laid his credentials before the emperor, who touched them with his hand, and inquired after the czar's health. Our honest Scot continues: "We imagined, the letter being delivered, all was over. But the master of the ceremonies brought back the ambassador, and then ordered all the company to kneel, and make obeisance nine times. At every third time we stood up, and kneeled on the ground again. Great pains were taken to avoid this painful piece of homage, but without success. The master of the ceremonies stood by, and delivered his orders in the Tartar language, by pronouncing the words 'morgu,' down, and 'boss,' up—two words which I cannot soon forget." Among the presents offered on this occasion were some specimens of the czar's skill in turnery, a handicraft which he had learned in the dockyards of Saardam and Deptford. Possibly they may be among the spoil obtained by the allied forces from Yuen-min-yuen, now on its way to England and France; but more probably, as articles not identified, and apparently of no value, they have perished in the sack of the place. This mission arrived at Pekin on the 18th of November, 1720, and made the longest stay of any on record—a hundred and fourteen days—leaving on the 2nd of March, 1721.

It was eventually arranged for the caravan system of trade to be abandoned, and all commerce between the two empires was appointed to be carried on at two specified frontier stations, where the merchandise on both sides was to be exposed for sale. At one of these stations, by far the most important, in a romantic valley surrounded by high

mountains, and intersected by the brook Kiakhta, the Russian town of that name arose, 5514 versts from Moscow, and 1532 from Pekin. At less than a quarter of a mile distant, the Chinese founded the settlement of Maimachen, or "the fortress of commerce;" and midway between the two places a wooden barricade marks the common boundary-line. Permission was at the same time conceded for some Russian priests to reside at Pekin for the celebration of Divine service; and the same favour was extended to some Russian scholars, for the purpose of studying the Chinese and Tartar languages, in order that good interpreters might be prepared, and communications be carried on more satisfactorily. There has usually also since been a Russian ambassador in the capital. General Ignatieff, now holding that office, was appealed to by the heads of departments to interpose on their behalf, and save the city from destruction on the late advance of the British and French troops to its walls; and he accepted the post of mediator, on condition that all the prisoners taken when under the protection of a flag of truce should be surrendered. Some surprise has been occasioned by the recent speedy telegrams respecting the Chinese treaty, *via* St. Petersburg. But there is a regular courier system, with relay horses, from Pekin, across Mongolia to Kiakhta, and thence to Irkutsk, which is reached by the common mail in sixteen days. In seventeen days more, despatches arrive at the telegraph-office at Kasan; so that, in little more than a month, intelligence travels between the Chinese capital and western Europe.

[To be continued.]

## "FAST" AND "STEADY;"

OR, THE CAREER OF TWO CLERKS.

PLATE III.

AFTER BUSINESS—SCENE THE FIRST.

WE may take for granted that Mr. Johnson, being a man of discrimination and calculation, knows what he is about. We may be pretty certain that it is not to every young man he happens to meet with, he would throw open his drawing-room and extend his hospitality; and we may be sure that young Speedwell has before this given some decided proofs of his "gentle breeding," as well as of his commercial abilities, or we should not find him in the position indicated by our artist.

And here we beg to remind our readers, that though "manners make the man," the adage comprises more than is seen on its surface, and that, by those whose *manners* are in process of forming, the value of *character* should be kept in view. "Whoever wishes to be held in high estimation, *may, if he will*; but he must endeavour to deserve, or he will never attain it. Character, like meaner commodities, has its price; not like them, indeed, can it be purchased by silver or gold, (however the ill-judging may deem,) but by sterling virtue—real goodness. By talents, much may be done, but with the application of our talents is our worth much more closely connected. The number of our talents, their variety, power, and value, do not de-

pend on ourselves: God has given to every man as it pleased him; but our use of those talents is directly our own province. Here we are accountable as stewards, to him who has said, 'Occupy till I come.' Great is the responsibility; our present comfort and future station depend on our wisdom, faithfulness, and energy herein."

You may, if you please, imagine this to be part of a friendly lecture delivered to young Speedwell by his employer, on the occasion of his inviting him to spend a friendly evening with him at home—after business.

"Vastly imprudent, though, to invite the young man to his home and family in that sort of way." We can hear something like this lisped in our ear, reprovingly, though we cannot see the speaker.

"Dear madam, why?"

"Why, indeed! with his family, and all daughters too! Isn't that a good reason why?"

Evidently Mr. Johnson does not think so; and if we may venture another surmise, the subject has been previously discussed between himself and Mrs. Johnson—the lady who, as you perceive, sits opposite to him at their fireside. Something in the following fashion, for instance.

Mr. Johnson. My dear, I have been thinking of inviting young Speedwell to spend an hour or two with us occasionally of an evening.

Mrs. Johnson. Have you, Mr. Johnson? Why should you do this?

Mr. J. Why, you see, my love, Frank Speedwell has very few friends or acquaintances in town. His is rather a solitary life, after leaving business, I am afraid; and I think it might be an advantage to the young man to go a little more into society. Don't you think so too, my dear?

Mrs. J. (*doubtfully*). I cannot say, indeed; that is, I dare say it would be an advantage to him; but I am not sure that it would be an equal advantage to us.

Mr. J. Perhaps not, my dear; but I am not sure that we ought to consider this in every case. And really, young Speedwell is an intelligent young fellow; well-behaved too, has gentlemanly manners, has evidently been well educated and well brought up altogether. He is a young man of sterling good character, or I shouldn't think of having anything to do with him out of business.

Mrs. J. Well, if you think so well of him, of course I cannot object, Mr. Johnson; only—

Mr. J. Only what, my love?

Mrs. J. Oh, nothing much; I was but thinking of our girls. There are Sarah and Jane, you know, to say nothing of Hester and little Fanny—

Mr. J. (*laughing*). Oh! Mrs. J., Mrs. J., you are a true mother. You cannot help thinking that your little geese are all swans; and you are afraid—

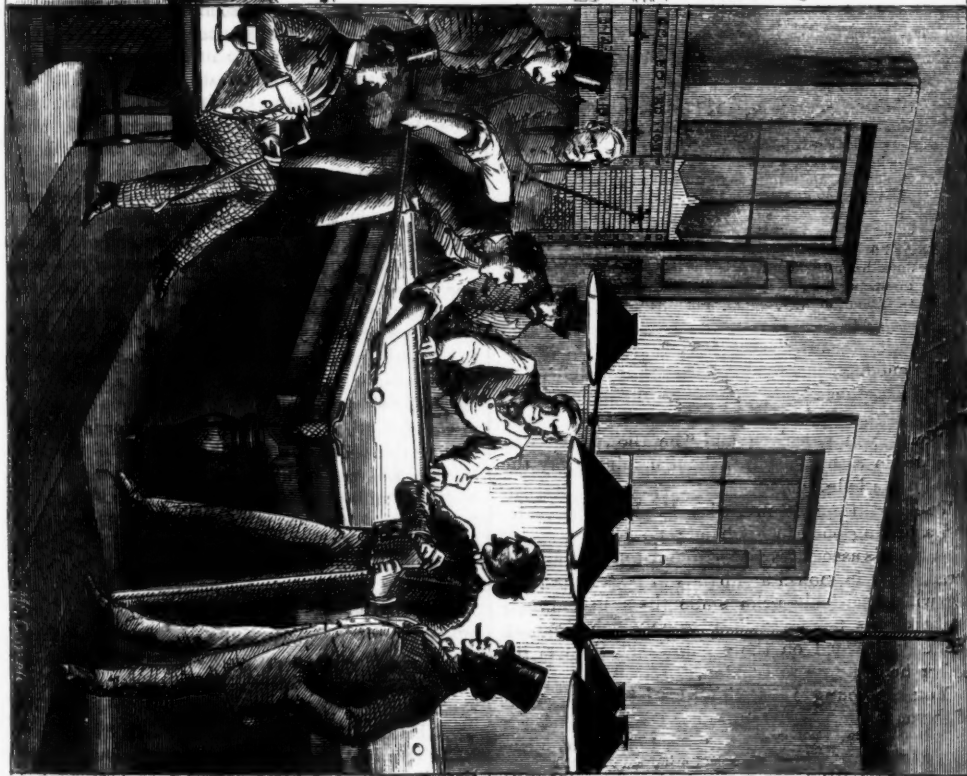
Mrs. J. Indeed, my dear, I am not so—so foolish; but there is such a thing as a young man—

Mr. J. Falling in love with a young woman. Very true, my dear Sarah. I think I can remember one such instance of folly. But I think we may risk it in this case.

And we can see how this conjugal dialogue terminated; for we have the scene before us, reader.



AFTER BUSINESS.



We do not think, either, that this is the first time young Speedwell has been admitted to this charmed circle, for he seems somewhat at home; and by the way in which he has edged himself up towards Miss Johnson at the piano, we may—; but all this is mere conjecture on our part just now. Only, we would have you observe how our wary matron (mamma, we mean), while she is professing to give her attention to Miss Fanny and Miss Fanny's book, cannot help watching what is going on behind her husband's back, there. And before long, Mr. Johnson will be reminded, or we are mistaken, of what she said "from the very first." "I knew it would be so, my dear, and you only laughed at me." And having thus discharged her conscience, who more pleased than mamma herself?

Before we have done with this scene, we would have you notice, gentle reader, how the cords of our merchant's countenance are relaxed, so that he looks ten years younger, now that he is at home, than when we last met with him in his counting-house. He has thrown off the cares of business; and though he is edifying himself with the "Times," which he has brought with him from the city, depend on it he is taking to the lighter articles, and eschews the money-market column. "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." And presently he will lay his paper down altogether, for—"My dear, Sarah is just going to sing your favourite piece; and she will want your voice in the bass."

And so the evening passes away; and we are left to quote, from memory if we can, the poet's rhapsody (is it a rhapsody?):—

"Domestic happiness, thou only bliss  
Of Paradise that has survived the fall!  
Though few now taste thee, unimpaired and pure,  
Or tasting, long enjoy thee! Too infirm  
Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets  
Unmixed with drops of bitter, which neglect  
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup.  
Thou art the nurse of Virtue; in thine arms  
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,  
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.

— Thou art meek and constant, hating change,  
And finding in the calm of truth-tryed love  
Joys that more stormy raptures never yield.  
Forsaking thee, what shipwrecks have we made  
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown!"

#### SCENE THE SECOND.

For one moment, reader, turn aside with us, and enter into other society than that to which you are accustomed. It is "after business" with young Littlewit, you perceive; and "he knows very well what to do with himself, without moping away the time in his lodgings."

The last time we met with Fred Littlewit, he had a betting-book in his hand; now he has a cue. You see his associates also—Mephistopheles among them, cigar in mouth and hands in pockets, watching with a sardonic grim smile the skill and dexterity of his neophyte in a game which Fred, by the way, learned on the sly down at Somerville, before he came up to London.

You see young Littlewit's associates also—some of them.

"The shark is there,  
And the shark's prey; the spendthrift, and the leech  
That sucks him."

You may find them all in that gas-lighted billiard-room, if you will.

"Pho! why should not Frederick Littlewit play at a game of billiards now and then when business is over? What harm is there in that?" you wish to know, young friend of ours.

Do you know, unsophisticated (or sophistical) youth, what questions are included and looked up in that simple inquiry of yours? For instance: "Why should not a young man of spirit choose his own associates, and mingle with the idle, the dissolute, the profane, and the knavish, in defiance of the emphatic warning, that 'a companion of fools shall be destroyed?'" Or this: "Why should he not injure his health, destroy his reputation, squander his money, or encourage others to squander theirs, dissipate his mind, weaken his energies for the daily business of life, and run the hazard of ruining his soul, if he has a mind to do all these things?" Please to answer these questions as you best can, and then we can tell what harm is likely to accrue to young Littlewit by his being found in a London billiard-room.

And do not for a moment imagine that a young man who is so much at home in a scene like this, and with companions like these, is at all squeamish as to other haunts of more than questionable amusement and deeper vice. The tavern and the theatre, the casino and the gambling "hell," will follow in succession. Nay, he is familiar with them already; it is not difficult to discover this in his profligate air and jaded look.

He has learned a new accomplishment, too, since we met with him last—that black cutty pipe. Young Littlewit thinks it manly to smoke; and, in spite of his carefulness to wash the fumes of tobacco from his mouth, and to brush away the scent of it from his garments before he goes to business in the morning, he cannot so sweeten himself that Mr. Johnson does not begin to wonder what disagreeable effluvia it is which so frequently pervades his clerks' office, and occasionally invades his own.

And so, what with smoking, and tipping, and billiard-playing, and dicing, and—but we stop here, because "it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done in secret." We may be sure, however, that sin will eventually "find out" the sinner; and that even some ways which "seem right unto a man," are as certainly, in the end thereof, "the ways of death."

On the other hand, and glancing once more at the pleasanter, happier scene in our picture, we can see that "good understanding giveth favour," and "he who getteth wisdom and keepeth it, loves his own soul, and shall find good."

#### GREAT FROSTS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

WHILE the remembrance of the rigorous winter of this year is still fresh in the public mind, many will read with interest the account of some of the great frosts of last century, by that prince of natural history observers, Gilbert White of Selborne.

As the frost in January, 1708, was, for the small time it lasted, the most severe that we had then

known for many years, and was remarkably injurious to evergreens, some account of its rigour, and reason of its ravages, may be useful.

For the last two or three days of the former year, there were considerable falls of snow, which lay deep and uniform on the ground, without any drifting, wrapping up the more humble vegetation in perfect security. From the first day to the fifth of the new year, more snow succeeded; but from that day the air became entirely clear, and the heat of the sun about noon had a considerable influence in sheltered situations.

It was in such an aspect that the snow on the author's evergreens was melted every day, and frozen intensely every night; so that the laurustines, bays, laurels, and arbutuses looked, in three or four days, as if they had been burnt in the fire; while a neighbour's plantation of the same kind, in a high, cold situation, where the snow was never melted at all, remained uninjured.

From hence I would infer that it is the repeated melting and freezing of the snow that is so fatal to vegetation, rather than the severity of the cold. Therefore it highly behoves every planter, who wishes to escape the cruel mortification of losing in a few days the labour and hopes of years, to bestir himself on such emergencies, and, if his plantations are small, to avail himself of mats, cloths, peas-haulm, straw, reeds, or any such covering, for a short time; or, if his shrubberies are extensive, to see that his people go about with prongs and forks, and carefully dislodge the snow from the boughs; since the naked foliage will shift much better for itself, than where the snow is partly melted and frozen again.

It may perhaps appear at first like a paradox; but doubtless the more tender trees and shrubs should never be planted in hot aspects; not only for the reason assigned above, but also because, thus circumstanced, they are disposed to shoot earlier in the spring, and to grow on later in the autumn than they would otherwise do, and so are sufferers by lagging or early frosts. For this reason, also, plants from Siberia will hardly endure our climate; because, on the very first advances of spring, they shoot away, and so are cut off by the severe nights of March or April. Dr. Fothergill and others have experienced the same inconvenience with the more tender shrubs from North America, which they therefore plant under north walls. There might also be a wall to the east, to defend them from the piercing blasts from that quarter.

This observation might, without any impropriety, be carried into animal life; for discerning bee-masters now find that their hives should not in the winter be exposed to the hot sun, because such unseasonable warmth awakens the inhabitants too early from their slumbers, and, by putting their juices into motion too soon, subjects them afterwards to inconveniences when rigorous weather returns.

The coincidents attending this short but intense frost were, that the horses fell sick with an epidemic distemper, which injured the wind of many, and killed some; that colds and coughs were general among the human species; that it froze under people's beds for several nights; that meat was so

hard frozen that it could not be spitted, and could not be secured but in cellars; and that several red-wings and thrushes were killed by the frosts.

On the third of January, Benjamin Martin's thermometer, within doors, in a close parlour where there was no fire, fell in the night to 20, and on the 4th to 18, and on the 7th to 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ , a degree of cold which the owner never since saw in the same situation; and he regrets much that he was not able at that juncture to attend his instrument abroad. All this time the wind continued north and north-east; and yet on the 8th, roost-cocks, which had been silent, began to sound their clarions, and crows to clamour, as prognostic of milder weather; and, moreover, moles began to heave and work, and a manifest thaw took place.

And here it may be proper to observe, on what has been said above, that though frosts advance to their utmost severity by somewhat of a regular gradation, yet thaws do not usually come on by as regular a declension of cold, but often take place immediately from intense freezing.

To the great credit of Portugal laurels and American junipers, be it remembered, that they remained untouched amidst the general havoc: hence men should learn to ornament chiefly with such trees as are able to withstand accidental severities, and not subject themselves to the vexation of a loss which may befall them once perhaps in ten years, yet may hardly be recovered through the whole course of their lives.

As it appeared afterwards, the ilexes were much injured, the cypresses were half destroyed, the arbutuses lingered on, but never recovered; and the bays, laurustines, and laurels were killed to the ground; and the very wild hollies, in hot aspects, were so much affected that they cast all their leaves.

By the 14th of January, the snow was entirely gone; the turnips emerged, not damaged at all, save in sunny places; the wheat looked delicately, and the garden plants were well preserved; for snow is the most kindly mantle that infant vegetation can be wrapped in: were it not for that friendly meteor, no vegetable life could exist at all in northerly regions. Yet in Sweden the earth in April is not divested of snow for more than a fortnight before the face of the country is covered with flowers.

There were some circumstances attending the remarkable frost in January, 1776, so singular and striking that a short detail of these likewise may not be unacceptable. The most certain way to be exact will be to copy the passages from my journal, which were taken from time to time as things occurred. But it may be proper previously to remark, that the first week in January was uncommonly wet, and drowned with vast rains from every quarter; from whence may be inferred, as there is great reason to believe is the case, that intense frosts seldom take place till the earth is perfectly glutted and chilled with water;\* and hence dry autumns are seldom followed by rigorous winters.

\* The autumn preceding January, 1763, was very wet, and particularly the month of September, during which there fell at Lyndon, in the county of Rutland, six inches and a half of rain. And the terrible long frost in 1739-40 set in after a rainy season, and when the springs were very high.

January 7th.—Snow driving all the day, which was followed by frost, sleet, and some snow, till the 12th, when a prodigious mass overwhelmed all the works of men, drifting over the tops of the gates and filling the hollow lanes.

On the 14th, the writer was obliged to be much abroad, and thinks he never before or since has encountered such rugged Siberian weather. Many of the narrow roads were now filled above the tops of the hedges; through which the snow was driven into most romantic and grotesque shapes, so striking to the imagination as not to be seen without wonder and pleasure. The poultry dared not stir out of their roosting-places; for cocks and hens are so dazzled and confounded by the glare of snow, that they would soon perish without assistance. The hares also lay sullenly in their seats, and would not move till compelled by hunger; being conscious, poor animals, that the drifts and heaps treacherously betray their footsteps, and prove fatal to numbers of them.

From the 14th the snow continued to increase, and began to stop the road wagons and coaches, which could no longer keep on their regular stages; and especially on the western roads, where the fall appears to have been deeper than in the south. The company at Bath, that wanted to attend the Queen's birthday, were strangely incommoded: many carriages of persons who got in their way to town from Bath as far as Marlborough, after strange embarrassments, here met with a *ne plus ultra*. The ladies fretted, and offered large rewards to labourers if they would shovel them a track to London; but the relentless heaps of snow were too bulky to be removed; and so the 18th passed over, leaving the company in very uncomfortable circumstances at the Castle and other inns.

On the 20th, the sun shone out for the first time since the frost began; a circumstance that has been remarked before much in favour of vegetation. All this time the cold was not very intense, for the thermometer stood at 29, 28, 25, and thereabout; but on the 21st it descended to 20. The birds now began to be in a very pitiable and starving condition. Tamed by the season, sky-larks settled in the streets of towns, because they saw the ground was bare; rooks frequented dunghills close to houses; and crows watched horses as they passed, and greedily devoured what dropped from them; hares now came into men's gardens, and, scraping away the snow, devoured such plants as they could find.

On the 22nd the author had occasion to go to London through a sort of Laplandian scene, very wild and grotesque indeed. But the metropolis itself exhibited a still more singular appearance than the country; for, being bedded deep in snow, the pavement of the streets could not be touched by the wheels or the horses' feet, so that the carriages ran about without the least noise. Such an exemption from din and clatter was strange, but not pleasant; it seemed to convey an uncomfortable idea of desolation.

"*Ipsa silentia terrent.*"

On the 27th, much snow fell all day, and in the evening the frost became very intense. At South Lambeth, for the four following nights, the ther-

monometer fell to 11, 7, 6, 6; and at Selborne to 7, 6, 10; and on the 31st of January, just before sunrise, with rime on the trees and on the tube of the glass, the quicksilver sunk exactly to zero, being 32 degrees below the freezing-point; but by eleven in the morning, though in the shade, it sprung up to 16½—a most unusual degree of cold this for the south of England! During these four nights, the cold was so penetrating that it occasioned ice in warm chambers and under beds; and in the day the wind was so keen that persons of robust constitutions could scarcely endure to face it. The Thames was at once so frozen over, both above and below bridge, that crowds ran about on the ice. The streets were now strangely encumbered with snow, which crumbled and trode dusty, and, turning grey, resembled baysalt: what had fallen on the roofs was so perfectly dry, that, from first to last, it lay twenty-six days on the houses in the city—a longer time than had been remembered by the oldest housekeepers living. According to all appearances, we might now have expected the continuance of this rigorous weather for weeks to come, since every night increased in severity; but behold, without any apparent cause, on the 1st of February, a thaw took place, and some rain followed before night; making good the observation above, that frosts often go off as it were at once, without any gradual declension of cold. On the 2nd of February, the thaw persisted; and on the 3rd, swarms of little insects were frisking and sporting in a courtyard of South Lambeth, as if they had felt no frost. Why the juices in the small bodies and smaller limbs of such minute beings are not frozen is a matter of curious inquiry.

Severe frosts seem to be partial, or to run in currents; for at the same juncture, as the author was informed by accurate correspondents, at Lyndon, in the county of Rutland, the thermometer stood at 19; at Blackburn, in Lancashire, at 19; and at Manchester, at 21, 20, and 18. Thus does some unknown circumstance strangely overbalance latitude, and render the cold sometimes much greater in the southern than the northern parts of this kingdom.

The consequences of this severity were, that in Hampshire, at the melting of the snow, the wheat looked well, and the turnips came forth little injured. The laurels and laurustines were somewhat damaged, but only in hot aspects. No evergreens were quite destroyed, and not half the damage sustained that befel in January, 1768. Those laurels that were a little scorched on the south sides, were perfectly untouched on their north sides. The care taken to shake the snow day by day from the branches, seemed greatly to avail the author's evergreens. A neighbour's laurel hedge, in a high situation, and facing to the north, was perfectly green and vigorous; and the Portugal laurels remained unhurt.

As to the birds, the thrushes and blackbirds were mostly destroyed; and the partridges, by the weather and poachers, were so thinned that few remained the following year.

The frost in December, 1784, was also very extraordinary. The first week in December was very wet, with the barometer very low. On the 7th,

with the barometer at 28 five-tenths, came on a vast snow, which continued all that day and the next, and most part of the following night; so that by the morning of the 9th, the works of men were quite overwhelmed, the lanes filled so as to be impassable, and the ground covered 12 or 15 inches without any drifting. On the 10th, in the morning, the quicksilver of Dollond's glass was down to half a degree below zero, and that of Martin's, which was absurdly graduated only to four degrees above zero, sunk quite into the brass guard of the ball, so that, when the weather became most interesting, this was useless. On the 10th, at eleven at night, though the air was perfectly still, Dollond's glass went down to one degree below zero! This strange severity of the weather made me very desirous to know what degree of cold there might be in such an exalted and near situation as Newton. We had, therefore, on the morning of the 10th, written to Mr. —, and entreated him to hang out his thermometer made by Adams, and to pay some attention to it morning and evening, expecting wonderful phenomena in so elevated a region, at 200 feet or more above my house. But, behold! on the 10th, at eleven at night, it was down only to 17, and the next morning at 22, when mine was at 10! We were so disturbed at this unexpected reverse of comparative local cold, that we sent one of my glasses up, thinking that of Mr. — must somehow be wrongly constructed. But, when the instruments came to be confronted, they went exactly together, so that, for one night at least, the cold at Newton was 18 degrees less than at Selborne, and through the whole frost, 10 or 12 degrees; and, indeed, when we came to observe consequences, we could readily credit this, for all my laurustines, bays, ilexes, arbutuses, cypresses, and even my Portugal laurels, and, which occasions more regret, my fine sloping laurel-hedge, were scorched up, while at Newton the same trees had not lost a leaf!

We had steady frost on the 25th, when the thermometer in the morning was down to 10 with us, and at Newton only to 21. Strong frost continued till the 31st, when some tendency to thaw was observed, and by January the 3rd, 1785, the thaw was confirmed, and some rain fell.

A circumstance that I must not omit, because it was new to us, is, that on Friday, December the 10th, being bright sunshine, the air was full of icy *spiculae*, floating in all directions, like atoms in a sunbeam let into a dark room. We thought them at first particles of the rime falling from my tall hedges, but were soon convinced to the contrary, by making our observations in open places where no rime could reach us. Were they watery particles of the air frozen as they floated, or were they evaporations from the snow frozen as they mounted?

We were much obliged to the thermometers for the early information they gave us, and hurried our apples, pears, onions, potatoes, etc., into the cellar and warm closets; while those who had not, or neglected such warnings, lost all their stores of roots and fruits, and had their very bread and cheese frozen.

I must not omit to tell you that, during those

two Siberian days, my parlour cat was so electric, that, had a person stroked her, and been properly insulated, the shock might have been given to a whole circle of people.

I forgot to mention before that, during the two severe days, two men who were tracing hares in the snow, had their feet frozen; and two men who were much better employed, had their fingers so affected by the frost, while they were thrashing in a barn, that mortification followed, from which they did not recover for many weeks.

This frost killed all the furze and most of the ivy, and in many places stripped the hollies of all their leaves. It came at a very early time of the year, before old November ended, and may yet be allowed, from its effects, to have exceeded any since 1739-40.

### A TRUE TALE OF SLAVERY.

CHAPTER V.—MY MASTER GOES TO WASHINGTON AS MEMBER OF CONGRESS—HE IS ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED—WEDDING TRIP TO CHICAGO—CANADA—NEW YORK—MY ESCAPE FROM SLAVERY.

THE latter end of the third year after I was sold, my master was elected Member of Congress. I was ordered to get ready for Washington. We were not many days on the way to this place, which I so much wanted to see. It is a very lively place during the Session, and much enjoyed by the slaves, their privileges being greatly extended. They get up balls and parties, and seem to be as happy as their masters. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of these slaves in the Northern States, with whom I have danced, whose happiness, like mine, ended with the ball.

I could tell many things I observed of the life of members of Congress when at Washington, but I refrain from mentioning more than one or two customs of social life.

I will say it is twelve o'clock. The ladies have taken breakfast. A visitor comes and rings the door-bell, and you, on answering it, tell her that the mistress is not in; the reply most invariably is, "Go and tell her who it is, and she will be in." Just as well say, "Go and tell her she has lied, not knowing who has called to see her." The same is the case of the gentlemen. Here is a bill before the House, the merits and demerits of which they have spent weeks in discussing; it is now to be voted on at such an hour. The sergeant-at-arms is sent out in search of the absent members; some of them are having a little game of cards—could not think of waiting until after four o'clock; the pay is just the same for playing cards as though they were making laws, only you must lie a little when the sergeant-at-arms calls, and say that you are not in. I could not bear this system of lying. I avoided answering these calls whenever I could.

After my master had been there a short time, he went to board with Mrs. P—, who had two young nieces here, to one of whom he was soon engaged to be married. As good luck would have it, this young lady had a sister living in Chicago, and no place would suit her like that to get married in.

I admired her taste much. I wanted to go there too. My master could not do otherwise than give his consent to go there with her. The next question to be settled was about taking me with him into a free state. Near the time for him to leave, he told me that he intended to marry. I was pleased at this, and anxious to know who the fortunate lady might be. He did not hesitate to tell me what he intended to do, stating at the same time that he would take me with him if I would not leave him. "Sir," said I, "I never thought that you suspected me of wanting to leave you."

"I do not suspect you, John. Some of the members of the House have tried to make me believe that you would run away if I took you with me. Well, get my things all ready; we are to leave on the first day of next week; I will try you, any how."

Everything was ready, and the hoped-for time came. He took his intended, and off we started for the West. When we were taking the boat at Baltimore for Philadelphia, he came up to me and said, "Call me Mr. Sawyer; and if anybody asks you who you are, and where you are going, tell them that you are a free man, and hired by me."

We stopped two or three days at the Niagara Falls; from thence we went to Buffalo, and took the boat for Chicago; Mr. Sawyer had been here but a few days before he was taken sick. In five weeks from the time of his arrival here, he was married and ready to leave for home. On our return, we went into Canada. Here I wanted to leave him, but there was my sister and a friend of mine at home in slavery; I had succeeded in getting papers that might have been of great value to my friend. I had tried, but could not get anything to answer my purpose. I tried to get a seaman's protection from the English Custom-house, but could not without swearing to a lie, which I did not feel disposed to do.

We left here for New York, where we stopped three or four days. I went to see some of my old friends from home, who I knew were living there. I told them that I wanted their advice. They knew me, they knew my master, and they knew my friends also. "Now tell me my duty," said I. The answer was a very natural one, "Look out for yourself first." I weighed the matter in my mind, and found the balance in favour of stopping. If I returned along with my master, I could do my sister no good, and could see no further chance of my own escape. I then set myself to work to get my clothes out of the Astor House Hotel, where we were stopping; I brought them out in small parcels, as if to be washed. This job being done, the next thing was to get my trunk to put them in. I went to Mr. Johnson's shop, which was in sight of the Astor House Hotel, and told him that I wanted to get my trunk repaired. The next morning I took my trunk in my hand with me: when I went down, whom should I see at the foot of the steps but Mr. Sawyer? I walked up to him, and showed him a rip in the top of the trunk, opening it at the same time that he might see that I was not running off. He told me that I could change it, or get a new one if I liked. I

thanked him, and told him we were very near home now, and with a little repair the old one would do. At this we parted. I got a friend to call and get my trunk, and pack up my things for me, that I might be able to get them at any minute. Mr. Sawyer told me to get everything of his in, and be ready to leave for home the next day. I went to all the places where I had carried anything of his, and where they were not done, I got their cards and left word for them to be ready by the next morning. What I had got were packed in his trunk; what I had not been able to get, there were the cards for them in his room. They dined at the Astor at three o'clock; they leave the room at four o'clock; at half-past four o'clock I was to be on board the boat for Providence. Being unable to write myself at that time, and unwilling to leave him in suspense, I got a friend to write as follows:—

"Sir—I have left you, not to return; when I have got settled, I will give you further satisfaction. No longer yours,  
JOHN S. JACOB."

This note was to be put into the post-office in time for him to get it the next morning. I waited on him and his wife at dinner. As the town clock struck four, I left the room. I then went through to New Bedford, where I stopped for a few months.

Thank God! I am now out of their reach; the old doctor is dead; I can forgive him for what he did do, and would have done if he could. The lawyer I have quite a friendly feeling for, and would be pleased to meet him as a countryman and a brother, but not as a master.

CHAPTER VI.—SENSATIONS OF FREEDOM—SELF-EDUCATION  
—A WHALING VOYAGE—I MEET MY SISTER, AND HEAR  
FROM HER ABOUT MY FRIENDS AT EDENTON—THE FUGI-  
TIVE SLAVE BILL.

ON arriving at New Bedford, I was introduced to Mr. William P—, a very fatherly old man, who had been a slave in Alexandria. For the first week or so I could not realize the great transformation from a chattel slave to a man; it seemed to me like a dream; but I soon began to feel my responsibility, and the necessity of mental improvement. The first thing, therefore, that I strove to do was to raise myself above the level of the beast, where slavery had left me, and fit myself for the society of man. I first tried this in New Bedford by working in the day and going to school at night. Sometimes my business would be such that I could not attend evening schools; so I thought the better plan would be to get such books as I should want, and go a voyage to sea. I accordingly shipped on board the "Frances Henrietta," of New Bedford. This was a whaling voyage; but I will not trouble you with any fishing stories. I will make it short. After being absent three years and a half, we returned home with a full ship, 1700 barrels of sperm oil and 1400 of whale oil.

I had made the best possible use of my leisure hours on board, and kept the object that drove me from my friends and my home before me when on shore. I had promised myself, if what money I had coming to me would be an inducement to any one to bring my sister off from the south, that I would have her; but there was better news than that, in the bosom of an old friend, waiting to be delivered.

The ship dropped her anchor, and the shore boats came off with friends of different persons on board, among whom was R. P——. He had scarcely spoken to me before he began to tell me about my sister; her coming to New Bedford in search of me, and her going back to New York, where, he told me, I should find her. This news was to me quite unexpected. I said, if my sister was free from her oppressor, I was a happy man. I hurried on shore, drew some money of the owners, and made my way to New York. I found my sister living with a family as nurse at the Astor House. At first she did not look natural to me; but how should she look natural, after having been shut out from the light of heaven for six years and eleven months! I did not wish to know what her sufferings were, while living in her place of concealment. The change that it had made in her was enough to make one's soul cry out against this curse of curses, that has so long trampled humanity in the dust.

After she had recovered a little from the surprise of seeing me, I began to speak of home. "Oh, brother," she said, "grandmother was so disappointed in your stopping behind. Mr. S—— had written for them to make ready his house for his reception on such a day; grandmother got the news of it, and invited some of your old friends to come and spend the evening with you. Supper was all ready, and our ears were all intent to catch the first blast of the stage horn, when Uncle Mark left the room to go and meet you. The coach drove up to the tavern door, and the passengers had all got out, when Dr. W—— asked Mr. S—— what had become of you. He said the abolitionists had got you away from him in New York. When Uncle Mark returned, grandmother looked for awhile, and then asked, 'Where is my child?' 'He is gone, mother; he left Mr. S—— in New York.'

"When she heard that you were gone, she wept like a child. Aunt Sue Bent was there, and on seeing grandmother's tears, said to her: 'Molly, my child, this is no time for crying. Dry up those tears, fall upon your knees, and thank God that one more has made his escape from the house of bondage. I came here to see him, but I am glad he is not here. God bless the boy, and keep him from all harm.'

"This (continued my sister) increased my anxiety, and caused me to adopt new plans for my escape. I wrote a letter to the doctor, asking him if he would sell me to my grandmother. It was sent to New York, and there mailed for Edenton. The letter was received by the doctor, and answered by his son Caspar. He could now no longer doubt that I was gone, and resorted to a cunningly-devised artifice to bring me back. Part of his son's letter ran as follows:—'Harriet, we are all glad to hear from you; and let me assure you, if our family ever did entertain anything different from the most friendly feelings for you, they exist no longer. We want to see you once more, with your old friends around you, made happy in your own home. We cannot sell you to your grandmother; the community would object to your returning to live in a state of freedom. Harriet, doubtless before this you have heard of the death of your aunt Betty.

In her life she taught us how to live, and in her death she taught us how to die.'

"From that letter, my uncle saw that escape was my only hope, and that there was no time like the present for action. While everybody believed that I was in New York was the best time to get there. He accordingly made arrangements with the captain of a vessel running between New York and Edenton, for my passage to the former port.

"I had been here but a short time, when some of my friends sent for me to acquaint me of my danger. Mrs. T—— gave me a letter that Mr. T—— had received from Dr. N——. In that letter he said he wanted to catch me, to make an example of, for the good of the institution of slavery. But, brother, I have now fallen into new hands. Mary Matilda N—— is married to a northern man. He, too, is trying to find out where I am stopping in New York. I know not where to go, nor what to do."

I could see my sister's danger, and well imagine her feelings. We selected Boston, Massachusetts, for our home, and remained there quietly for a few years. Massachusetts had so far precluded the slaveholders from her borders, as to make the hunted fugitive feel himself somewhat secure under the shadow of her laws. Her great men had not sold themselves to the slave power, and her little men had not learnt that they were slaves until after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Bill. From that hour I resolved to seek a home in some foreign clime.

Mrs. —, on hearing my intention to leave the north, sent for me. I called on her and was shown to her room by my sister, when the following conversation took place.

"John, I understand you intend to leave for some years."

"I do, madam."

"Then my business with you is with respect to your sister. She has spent many years in our family, and we are still desirous to have her remain with us. John, I know that the law is an absolute one, and that the prosecutors are deaf to the claims of justice and humanity; but I have resolved that Harriet shall not be taken out of my house. This I will promise you as a lady."

A few months after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Bill, my sister was looking over the list of arrivals in one of the daily papers, when she saw the names of Mr. and Mrs. M—— of Edenton. She immediately made it known to Mrs. —, who sent her out of the house without a moment's delay. As the little girl that she had charge of at the time would not be separated from her, they were both sent off together. In due time Mr. M—— came rapping at the door, not as an honest man, but as a slave-catcher. The door being opened, he said to the woman, "Go and tell Harriet that I have got a letter for her; it is from her grandmother, and I have promised to deliver it to her myself." The message was taken to Mrs. —, who informed him that my sister had left town, and that he could not see her. M—— saw that all of his plans were frustrated, and sold my sister for 300 dollars. She was paid for by her mistress and her friends, and is now living in safety.

## VARIETIES.

**CHINESE WORSHIP OF THE DEAD.**—The special object of the ceremonial season called Tsing-ming is, to tell the truth, to pay worshipful homage to their departed relatives. Some foreign writers, as Fortune, Davis, and Bowring, etc., have attempted to set it off merely as a series of "reverential services rendered to ancestors," and not religious homage. If so, what mean these trays laden with offerings of pork, fish, and fowl; these libations of wine, these bundles of candles and incense-sticks; these holocausts of gilt paper, paper money, paper clothes, paper houses, paper furniture; and these numberless prostrations, ceremonies, and prayers offered up to departed ancestors and parents, with more earnestness, devoutness, order, and punctuality, than even before the shrines of the idols? "Reverential services and not religious worship to ancestors," forsooth! and yet so gross and palpable is this species of necrolatry and so offensive to the religious sense of his Holiness of Rome, that even he, not always particularly nice on such points, has forbidden its observance amongst "the faithful" in China.—*"Life in China,"* by Rev. William C. Milne, M.A.

**MUSICAL FISH.**—Dr. Adams, the surgeon and naturalist of a recent expedition, says:—"While on board the brig 'Ariel,' then lying off the mouth of the river of Borneo, I had the good fortune to hear that solemn aquatic concert of the far-famed organ-fish, or drum—a species of Pogonias. These singular fishes produce a loud monotonous singing sound, which rises and falls, and sometimes dies away, or assumes a very low drumming character; and the noise appeared to proceed mysteriously from the bottom of the vessel. This strange submarine chorus of fishes continued to amuse us for about a quarter of an hour, when the music, if so it may be called, suddenly ceased, probably on the dispersion of the band of performers."—*Voyage of H.M.S. "Samarang."*

**THE GLASGOW WATERWORKS.**—The engineering cost of these works was to have been about £540,000 for 26,000,000 gallons per day. They have cost about £700,000, but have produced 30,000,000 gallons a day. It is satisfactory to know that you are not called upon to pay a single penny more in the pound than you formerly paid for the inferior supply from the Clyde; and, more than this, the saving in articles of domestic consumption to which water is applied—such as soap, and tea and coffee—effected by the requisite purity and softness of the water, as compared with the hard water you have been accustomed to use, is nearly equal to your whole water rate, and is equivalent to a free gift to the city of £1,000,000 sterling. In the consumption of soap alone, the saving to the inhabitants on the north of the river will be nearly £30,000 a year. The total population of Glasgow may be taken at present at 460,000; deduct for Gorbals 110,000; total on north of river 350,000. Mr. Porter estimates the annual consumption of soap at 9·2 lbs. per individual. This, at 5½d. per lb., will give £72,000 as the annual cost of soap, on the average of the country, consumed by the 350,000 persons on the north of the Clyde. Since the introduction of the Loch Katrine water careful returns show that nearly one-half of the soap formerly used will now suffice. If these calculations were to be applied to London, the saving there, allowing for the harder character of the water, would amount to not less than £400,000 per annum, equivalent to the outlay of £10,000,000 of money, which it would be worth the while of the Londoners to pay for water equal in quality to that of Loch Katrine.—*Speech by the Engineer.*

**AN ARMY CROSSING AN INDIAN RIVER.**—I know no sight more pleasing to the eye than that of a force crossing an Indian river in the cool of the morning. Horsemen in advance soon cross and appear on the opposite banks among the brushwood and trees, while the column moves

slowly on, filing down the narrow road that leads to the ford. Once upon the shingle at the water's edge, the infantry commence taking off shoes and stockings to cross; some mount upon each other's backs like school-boys, having tossed up for the ride over. Then there's the joke; hundreds stay to drink of the clear cold water, native and European mingling together, then quietly wade across and form up upon the opposite bank; then down comes the artillery, gun after gun, dashing the stream about in a thousand rainbows as they pass through; there are the dragoons and gaudily dressed irregulars in groups quietly watering their horses; there dhooly-bearers carrying the sick men across, sprinkling their heads and dhoolies with the precious water as they go; yonder is a long line of camels jingling with bells, stalking over; and there is the great unwieldy elephant sucking up gallons of water for his capacious stomach (with a huge bunch of leaves tucked up between his trunk and tusk), or blowing it over his heated body and limbs. When he has quenched his thirst, he takes down his leaves and fans the flies away as he carefully moves off. Both banks are lined with men, horses, and followers, and droves of sheep, goats, and bullocks; all, and every animal, seem delighted with the river.—*Lowe's "Central India in 1857."*

**AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES MONTGOMERY.**—A small thin man, slightly stooping, with a bright eye and sharp face, he would not have appeared to me, had I met him in the street, as the man to write the "World before the Flood," or the "Wanderer of Switzerland." "Few men," I said to him, "have lived, as you have, to hear the verdict of posterity." "Yes," he replied, "I have survived nearly all my contemporaries." "And you have survived the attacks of the 'Edinburgh Review,' which predicted you would not live at all." The old man laughed gaily at this reminiscence of a slashing review forty years ago, and said: "The 'Review' was young then, and they thought they must kill some one in every number; and they sought to make a victim of me, but I lived through it. Those were early trials, and I had others; but trials are good for us, and they will soon be over." And this led to a religious conversation, in which he spoke of that peaceful but trembling hope he had, that he should soon enter upon the promised rest. His lips quivered, his voice broke, and big tears dropped from his eyes, as he spoke of his unworthiness to be accepted, but of his trust in the Saviour, whose grace is sufficient for the chief of sinners. We rose to take leave, and as we shook hands in silence, Mr. Hill repeated one of the poet's own stanzas from "The Grave":—

"There is a calm for those that weep,  
A rest for weary pilgrims found;"

and he had strength to say, "I hope we shall meet in heaven," and, following us to the door, bade us an affectionate farewell.—*"Travels in Europe and the East,"* by Samuel Irenæus Prime, United States.

**THE BIBLE IN THE BARRACK-ROOM.**—The late Duke of Wellington was applied to by the Naval and Military Bible Society for permission to place Bibles in regimental barrack-rooms. The Duke warmly gave his sanction to the proposal, and thus bore testimony to the usefulness of the Society, of which he became a patron. "I have no doubt the Bibles and Testaments will do good. When I was a subaltern, there was no such thing stirring, and no one but he who has been an eye-witness to the fact, can form a comparison as to the moral improvement which has taken place in the character of our soldiers since that period; and I have no doubt at all, but that a great deal of it may be attributed to the efforts of your Society in circulating the Scriptures among them."—*"The Word and the Sword,"* by the Rev. C. P. McCarthy.